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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
6 June 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Panamanian Situation Report
(As of 5:00 P.M. EDT)

1. The situation in the city of Colon is tense as the result of student clashes with secret police and the national guard. Security forces are making some headway in establishing control of the city. However, according to a communiqué issued by the Communist-dominated Panamanian Student Federation, a meeting is planned for 6:30 P.M. EDT in Panama City to consider plans to aid the students in Colon. If large-scale rioting spreads to Panama City the National Guard would be hard-pressed to control the situation.

2. On the morning of 6 June leaflets were scattered in Colon accusing officials of the Panamanian Department of National Investigations (DENI) with the death on 1 June of Juan Navas, a Communist student recently returned from Moscow; the leaflets also announced plans for a demonstration at DENI headquarters in Colon on the morning of 6 June.

3. At 8:40 A.M. students began attacking government and DENI offices, breaking windows, destroying property, and overturning cars. The number of rioters grew to an estimated 1,500 with reinforcements from secondary schools. According to press and radio accounts the post office, telegraph building, and the municipal building have been burned and the national lottery building sacked by a mob.

4. Although the National Guard used tear gas to disperse the students, shooting broke out, with at least three deaths reported and approximately 25

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wounded. Minister of Government Bazan has taken over the direction of government operations in Colon and ordered all Communists arrested. President Robles has reportedly ordered any radio station engaging in inflammatory broadcasts to be closed. In addition, the transisthmian highway has been ordered closed to prevent students from traveling to or from Colon.

5. The National Guard has been placed on full alert and the 400-man Colon detachment has been reinforced by some 80 riot-control guardsmen from Panama City. So far, no US personnel or installations have been attacked. Canal Zone police have set up riot squads in the towns of Balboa near Panama City and in Cristobal, near Colon, and one company of US forces at each end of the canal has been placed on alert.

-2-

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